the family name of Liu, began to pay reverence at the graves of the Han, and gave the designation Han to the state which it founded—sometimes called the Pei (Northern) Han. It was obviously making a bid for the mastery of all China and was seeking to give to its aspirations the guise of legitimacy. In 308 one of the line, Liu Yuan, felt himself strong enough to take the title of Emperor. It was his son, Liu Ts'ung, who brought the Western Chin to a violent termination.

Liu Ts'ung changed the name of the Hsiung Nu dynasty from Han to Chao (after an ancient feudal state by the latter name), usually called Ch'ien (Earlier) Chao. Liu Yuan was succeeded by a kinsman, and he, in turn, was slain by one of his own generals, also a Hsiung Nu, who took the throne and whose short line is known as Hou Chao, the Later Chao. These Hsiung Nu states, it is well to note, had their strongholds in the Northwest and sometimes their capital was at Ch'angan.

The Later Chao was succeeded in the Northwest by a state established by a Mongol people, formerly supposed—incorrectly—to be Tanguts, and who gave to the brief dynasty which they founded the name of Chin—the same as that of the great feudal state which in the third century B.C. had united China. During its comparatively brief course it was divided into two sections called Ch'ien and Hou—the Earlier and the Later Ch'in. In the second half of the fourth century the most powerful ruler of the Earlier Ch'in, Fu Chien, extended his boundaries into what is now the New Dominion, into Szechwan, and over much of North China, overrunning, among other small states, one which had its center in North Shansi and which had been founded by a family—possibly Mongol in stock—early in the fourth

century. Fu Chien came to grief in an attempt to push his conquests to the south against the Eastern Chin, and, disastrously defeated, was killed in a revolt of his own generals. One of these founded the Later Ch'in.

In the far Northwest, the general whom Fu Chien had dispatched into Central Asia, Lii Kuang, was returning from a successful campaign when he heard of the fall of his sovereign. Pausing in what is now Kansu, he carved out for himself a principality which he ultimately called Liang (Hou Liang, or the Later Liang, to distinguish it from another and slightly earlier